Spring 2018

PSC 2476W – The Arab-Israeli Conflict

Professor: Evgeny Finkel, efinkel@gwu.edu

TA: Emily Schraudenbach, eschraud@gwmail.gwu.edu

Lecture
Monday and Wednesday, 2:20-3:35PM, Gelman Library B02

Office Hours
Professor: Wednesday, 1-2PM or by appointment, Monroe Hall, Room 419
TA: Tuesday, 9-10am, Davis-Hodgkins House, Room 202

Course Description
This course focuses on the Arab-Israeli Conflict, its history and current state. The class begins with the history of the Jewish and Arab nationalism movements, surveys the situation in Palestine under the British Mandate and the after the establishment of the State of Israel up to the peace process, its collapse and recent political developments on the ground. The course will introduce and discuss the events, internal and external actors, concepts and theories that will help the students to better understand one of world’s most well-known, complicated and protracted conflicts.

Learning Objectives and Outcomes
As a result of completing this course, students will be able to:

• Understand the Arab-Israeli Conflict
• Understand the main theories, event, and explanations of the Arab-Israeli Conflict
• Analyze, synthesize, and critically evaluate the contemporary academic and political discourse on the topic
• To write an independently researched academic paper

Required Course Materials
• Ian J. Bickerton and Carla L. Klausner, *A History of the Arab-Israeli Conflict*, 7th edition, Routledge, 2016. (B&K; can be purchased/rented at the GW bookstore)

• Additional Required Readings are on Blackboard (BB)

**Class Policies**

This is a Writing in the Disciplines (WID) class and the students will be required to conduct various research and writing assignments that culminate in the end-of-class final research paper. The class combines lectures and in-class discussions, which means that the students are expected to attend the lectures and to read all the required materials. The class is structured around two meetings each week. Students’ active participation in the discussions is required and class participation is a substantial part of the final grade. Students who cannot attend a class or an exam because of a religious holiday should notify me during the first week of the semester. Makeup exams will be allowed only in cases of a religious holiday (after notifying me during the first week of the semester) or medical emergency. Late submission of assignments will be penalized by a half-grade penalty for each day of delay.

**Assignments and Grading Criteria**

- Book Reviews: 15% (Pass/Fail)
- Films Reflection Paper: 15%
- Final Research Paper: 60%
- Attendance and Participation: 10%

**Book Reviews**

You will have to submit three book reviews. You will choose one book from each group and submit your book review by the due date chosen for each group. You will not be allowed to write a review on more than one book from each group. The reviews should be 4-5 pages long, double space, Times New Roman 12 font size. The class TA will work with you on the technics of writing book reviews and more details will be given as you work on the reviews. Some books are available as an E-book on the Gelman Library website or are in the Gelman’s Reserves section, but some are not. *It is your responsibility to obtain the book you want to review in advance. If the book is checked out to someone else, there is nothing we will be able to do about this and
no extensions will be given because of book availability issues. If the book is unavailable at Gelman, request it from other WRLC libraries, check it out from a public library, purchase it on Amazon, iBooks, or any other bookstore. Again, this is your responsibility.

It is important to remember that the books you will be reading and reviewing are not objective academic studies; in fact many of the books were chosen precisely because of their biases and ideological viewpoints. Regardless of your ideological worldview, you might find some books or passages objectionable or even outrageous. An important component of this assignment is to learn to read, evaluate, and analyze different viewpoints, including those that run contrary to your ideological beliefs. I and the class TA will be happy to work with you on how to achieve this goal and you are strongly encouraged to seek our advise and guidance.

Group 1: Personal Narratives/Memoirs. DUE 02/14 IN CLASS


Group 2: Palestinian Perspective/Focus. DUE 03/19 IN CLASS


Group 3: Israeli Perspective/Focus. DUE 04/18 IN CLASS
• Uris, Leon. *Exodus*. (Any edition is fine)

**Film Reports**
The students will be required to submit a films’ reflection paper based on the films we will watch during the semester. The paper is about 7-8 pages long; the goal of the paper is to tie together and critically evaluate and assess the socio-political issues the films raise, the narratives they presents and the films’ portrayal of the conflict (especially compared to the macro-historical analysis which we will do in class). The last lecture will be devoted to an in-class, small group peer discussion of the papers. **The papers are due May 8, 12pm.**

**Research Paper**
The research paper provides you with the opportunity to pursue any analytical, theoretical, or historical question about the Arab-Israeli conflict that interests you. A good paper both informs and persuades; to do this it must be logically organized, clearly argued, well researched, and well documented. Avoid writing a paper that merely restates the readings. You are expected to do some original thinking, research, and analysis in this paper. There are several excellent guides on the web that I encourage you to consult on how to go about writing an analytical research paper. Some good sites include:

• How to Research a Political Science Paper, by Peter Liberman:  
  [http://qcpages.qc.edu/Political_Science/researching.html](http://qcpages.qc.edu/Political_Science/researching.html)

• Writing Political Science Papers: Some Useful Guidelines, by Peter Liberman,:  
  [http://qcpages.qc.edu/Political_Science/tips.html](http://qcpages.qc.edu/Political_Science/tips.html)

• Reading, Writing, and Researching for History: A Guide for College Students, by Patrick Rael:  
  [http://www.bowdoin.edu/writing-guides/](http://www.bowdoin.edu/writing-guides/)

• Writing a Research Paper, by Sarah Hamid:  
An accurate summary of some things not to do, which (unfortunately) students commonly do, can be found at Advice on How to Write a Bad Paper.

Paper proposals (about one page) which include the topic and at least five relevant sources are due by Friday, February 9, 5PM; the paper outline and summary (two to three pages) are due by Friday, March 23, 5PM. Remember, by that time you should also be in an advanced stage of research. The paper drafts will be reviewed by your peers and discussed during a special peer review session. The draft paper is due by Thursday, April 26, 5PM. The final paper should be 18-20 pages, double spaced, Times New Roman 12 font (not including bibliography), with one-inch margins. The final papers are due by Monday, May 14, 5PM. Late submission of proposals, outlines, and papers (both draft and final) will be penalized by a half of a letter grade for every day of the delay. The paper topic should be approved by the instructor. The students are strongly encouraged to discuss their ideas and progress with the instructor and the teaching assistant, and we do expect to meet every student at least twice during the class. If you are unable to come to our office hours, we will be happy to schedule a meeting at a different time. WE ARE HERE TO HELP YOU WITH THE WRITING PROCESS.

Technology

Cell phones are absolutely forbidden in the classroom. Students who use cell phones during the class will have them confiscated by the instructor. Cellphone usage will also adversely affect your attendance and participation grade. You are allowed to use laptops, but people with laptops are required to sit in the final row with no one sitting behind them. Use of any other technology has to be negotiated with the instructor in advance.

Academic Conduct

I personally support the GW Code of Academic Integrity. It states: “Academic dishonesty is defined as cheating of any kind, including misrepresenting one’s own work, taking credit for the work of others without crediting them and without appropriate authorization, and the fabrication of information.” For the remainder of the code, see: http://www.gwu.edu/~ntegrity/code.html

Any instance of plagiarism will be punished by an automatic F grade for the class as whole.
Special Needs and Support outside the Classroom

Any student who may need an accommodation based on the potential impact of a disability should contact the Disability Support Services office at 202-994-8250 in the Marvin Center, Suite 242, to establish eligibility and to coordinate reasonable accommodations. For additional information please refer to: http://gwired.gwu.edu/dss/

The University Counseling Center (UCC, 202-994-5300) offers 24/7 assistance and referral to address students’ personal, social, career, and study skills problems. Services for students include:

- Crisis and emergency mental health consultations
- Confidential assessment, counseling services (individual and small group), and referrals
01.17. Course Outline

01.22. Key Terms, Origins of the Conflict

- B&K: Introduction, Ch.1

01.24, 01.29. The British Mandate: The Conflict in the Making

- B&K: Ch. 2, 3 (up to p. 95)

01.31. Partition, 1948 War, Refugees, Suez Crisis. Part 1

- B&K: Ch. 3 (pp. 95-107), 4, 5

02.05. Writing in the Disciplines. Research Papers and Book Reviews: How to Start, First Steps (TA)

02.07. No Class. Instead, there will be a class on the Make-Up Day

02.12. Partition, 1948 War, Refugees, Suez Crisis. Part 2

- B&K: Ch. 6

02.19. President’s Day. No Classes.

02.21, 02.26. Occupation, Violence, Settlements

- B&K: Ch. 7

02.28. 1973-87

- B&K: Ch. 8, 9 (up to pg. 251)

03.05. Film 1.

03.07. 1987-1993. The First Intifada, Gulf War, and the Road to Oslo

- B&K: Ch. 9 (from p. 251), 10

03.12, 03.14. Spring Break, No Classes

03.19. The Oslo Process and its Collapse 1

- B&K: Ch. 11
03.21. Paper Research and Writing Workshop (TA)

03.26. The Oslo Process and its Collapse 2

• B&K: Ch. 12 (up to p. 371)

03.28. 2001-2006: The Second Intifada

• B&K: Ch. 12 (from p. 371), 13 (up to p. 400)
• Jonathan Rynhold, "Israel's Fence: Can Separation Make Better Neighbours?" *Survival* 46, 1, (2004), 55-76 (BB)

04.02. 2006-2013: Violence and Stalemate

• B&K: Ch. 13 (from p. 350), 14

04.04. Film 2. NOT IN CLASS (THE EXACT TIME AND PLACE ARE TBA)

04.09. Current Situation

• B&K: Ch. 15

04.11. What Next? Solutions, Alternatives, Actors

• B&K: Ch. 16

04.16. The US and the Foreign Relations of the Conflict

• John Mearsheimer and Stephen Walt, "The Israeli Lobby", *London Review of Books*, 23 March 2006 (BB, only the article, no need to read the replies)


**04.18. Arab-Israeli Conflict in Comparative and Theoretical Perspective**


**04.23. Film 3. IN CLASS**

**04.25. Recap, Missing Pieces**

**04.30. In-Class Paper Reviews Project.**

*Film Reflection Paper is due Tuesday, May 8, 12PM*

*The Final Paper is due Monday, May 14, 5PM*